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ABSTRACT

"The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life" by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray (New York: Free Press, 1994) has become one of the most controversial books of recent years. The crux of the controversy, the relationship between race and intelligence, has touched a nerve in the African American community. This non-exhaustive annotated bibliography provides insight into the reactions of the African American press and the African American ethos concerning rage, intelligence, politics, and social class. Thirty-three sources are listed. (SLD)

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The African American Press Examines "The Bell Curve": An Annotated Bibliography

by

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The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life by Richard J. Herrnstein and Charles Murray (New York: Free Press, 1994) [hereafter abbreviated TBC], has become one of the most controversial books in America. The crux of this controversy, race and intelligence, has touched a sensitive nerve in the African community. However, access to how we understand and feel about this book is often overlooked, therefore this non-exhaustive annotated African American press bibliography provides an insight into the African American centered ethos concerning race, intelligence, and the politics of race in America.

Alsbrook, James E. Blacks Will Have Their Day Despite Bell Curve Data. ST. LOUIS AMERICAN, November 10-16, 1994, vol.66, no.36, p.A-13 [also in the NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, November 2, 1994, vol.85, no.86, p.A-5, and the LOS ANGELES SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, p.A-14].

This work questions the reasoning of TBC, suggests that Black people investigate their true contribution to world civilization, points to Murray's disputed test results, and lack of genetic expertise to construct a valid conclusion.

Banks, Samuel L. The Bell Curve: Another Burden for Black People? LOS ANGELES SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, p.A-14.

TBC is a gross mean-spirited generalization that discounts individual differences and environmental variables, and thus fails to address 204 years of slavery, and 129 years of institutional and operational racism. TBC constitutes blatant racism, and continues the historic effort to debase, dehumanize and defame Black people.

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Baker, Lee D. For Whom the Bell Curve Tools: Poverty & Power, VOICE OF BLACK STUDIES, vol.19, no.1, Winter 1995, pp.7-8.

TBC has become the theoretical and "scientific" underpinning for a restrictive Republican welfare reform proposal, it formulates conclusions based on racist research, and is linked to a national conservative research clique via the Pioneer Fund.

The Bell Curve: Alarm or Bellwether? NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, November 30, 1994, vol.85, no.94, p.A-6 [also in THE CALL, November 9 - December 15, 1994, vol.75, no.20, pp.1,4.

A neutral National Newspaper Publishers Association 'bell curve' opinion survey consisting of Bernice Powell Jackson, James Strong, Jesse Jackson, James E. Alsbrook, Samuel Banks, Barry Murry, and William Reed.

The Bell Curve: To Find It a Rehash of Nazi Folklore. NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS, November 19, 1994, vol.86, no.47, pp.34,35.

A Brooklyn community forum organized by Samori Marksman and others concludes that TBC is a rehash of old anti-Black theories designed to demean, diminish and retard Black progress.

Boyd, Herb. The IQ Debate Revisited: Nature or Nurture. CRISIS, January 1995, vol.102, no.1, pp.23-26.

A critique and review of TBC controversy which concludes intelligence as relative, and in general, its measurement counter productive to understanding the complexities of human potential.

Brown, Astenu. The Bell Curve: Telling the Truth About Black Intelligence Quotient. LOS ANGELES SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, p.A-14.

A Los Angeles public school teacher argues that every twenty years or so, Black people are declared by white people to be less intelligent. The author contend that it is impossible for Black people to be inferior to whites, TBC is part of a cycle of racist nonsense, and that the total human genetic story needs to be told via an outline of how all people are genetically linked to the African experience.

Chandra, Satish. Crime in Psychology and the I.Q. Matter. NEW YORK AMSTERDAM NEWS, November 12, 1994, vol.85, no.46, p.13.

Herrnstein, the principle author of TBC is charged with suppression and harassment, after a flaw was reviled in his research purporting to prove the inferiority of non-white intelligence.

Clay, William L. Returning to the Debate on Race and Class. ST LOUIS AMERICAN, November 10-16, 1994, vol.66, no.36, p.A-12.

TBC national media hoopla is an attempt to justify discriminatory practices, hence no segment of American society should accept TBC message of an inherently intellectually inferior population. TBC should not be taken seriously.

Conrad, Cecillia E. Race, Earnings and Intelligence. BLACK ENTERPRISE, March 1995, vol.25, no.8, p.26.

TBC analysis is flawed because it attempts to obscure the fact that if employment bias is eliminated, the race (black-white) earning gap in America would disappear, and ignores discrimination as an explanation for the racial earning gap.

Fulani, Lenora. The Bell Curve Controversy. NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, January 25, 1995, vol.86, no.7, p.A-7.

TBC presents the dire consequences model of psychology, and thus fails to understand that intelligence is a continuous human developmental process. A new unity and fundamental restructuring of America is needed to create progressive environments free of official stupidity.

Hampson, Rick. The Book: A Review. LOS ANGELES SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, pp.A-14,A-15.

A review of TBC reviews reporting public reaction to the book. The author label TBC prediction of a new America ruled by an inherited intellectual elite, a cruel analysis.

Horne, Gerald. Bell Curves, Racism and Notions of Inferiority. BLACK ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, January 12, 1995, vol.11, no.23, p.124.

The genetically inferior should stop hectoring the issue (inferiority) and instead appreciate that there are worse fates in life. White people should be concerned with Asian I.Q. TBC is an updated version of social Darwinism, and thus scholars and thinkers need to be thinking about fresh and new ideas concerning old and complicated realities.

Hughes, Bill. What's I.Q. Got to Do with It. OAKLAND POST, November 9, 1994, vol.31, no.47, p.4.

Equates TBC with the intellectual ideology of Adolph Hitler, states that TCB idea of IQ as a determinant factor in defining intelligence or success is outdated; provides reasons for IQ score differences, and contend that TBC failed to recognize the new Black cultural renaissance.

Hutchinson, Earl Ofari. The Bell Curve Continues to Toll. NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, December 17, 1994, vol.85, no.99, p.A-7.
CITY SUN, December 21, 1994 -- January 10, 1995, vol.10, no.50, p.29.

Those who denounce TBC may be politically correct, but they have not disproved the three key thesis of TBC (IQ test scores are a valid measurement of intelligence, some percentage of intelligence is hereditary, IQ test scores predict success in life). TBC authors ignored studies that found no correlation between IQ, professional or business success. Test scores simply reflect cultural influences, environmental conditioning, and educational opportunity, more than cognitive ability.

Irvin, Nat. The Bell Curve. BLACK ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, November 3, 1994, vol.11, no.18, p.108.

The fact that Black people are still confronting the question of their worth in America at the end of the 20th century is due to racism. IQ tests and the role they play in shaping the way we are perceived is nothing new. The question for Black people is how to change the internal view of self and worth. Black response to TBC should be clear, and with sense of purpose that will empower Black children.

Jackson, Bernice Powell. The Bell Curve: Don't Buy the Book or the Argument. NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, November 9, 1994, vol.85, no.88, p.A-6 [also in the LOS ANGELS SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, p.A-14].

Argues that racism is alive and well in America, and that TBC gives academic legitimacy to an old unproven argument, and provides political fodder to end social programs. Readers are encouraged not to buy the book, or the argument.

Jackson, Jesse L. The Cell Curve: New Twist on An Old Theme--White Racial Superiority. LOS ANGELES SENTINEL, November 10, 1994, vol.LX, no.32, p.A-14 [re-titled "Murrayism is Racism" with last paragraph of original missing: DALLAS POST TRIBUNE, November 3-9, 1994, vol.46, no.146, p.2].

TBC is neither logically, biologically nor theologically sound, only the latest systematic public penning for a conservative racist attack on public policy. The author termed the latter "Murrayism".

Jackson, Jesse L. Jackson Says Race Superiority Book is Neither Logical, Biological or Theological. WASHINGTON AFRO-AMERICAN, October 22, 1994, vol.103, no.10, p.1.

TBC is an attempt to give intellectual standing and political footing to conservative public policies. During difficult economic times, racism seeks a scapegoat and re-work theories of racial superiority and inferiority.

Mitchell, Johnnie L. A Bell Tale. BLACK ISSUES IN HIGHER EDUCATION, January 12, 1995, vol.11, no.23, pp.1,5.

The normal bell curve theory is illegal, immoral and detrimental to America. Thus it permits systematic educational discrimination. The answer lie in quality teaching and learning environments, not necessarily desegregation.

Molner, Monroe D. The Bell Curve is An Intellectual Curve Ball. MICHIGAN CHRONICLE, December 7-13, 1994, vol.58, no.12, p.6-A [Bell Curve comic script by Tim Jackson featured].

TBC gives aid and comfort to racist who believe African Americans have a low IQ. Multi-cultural examples of how class status, not IQ, determines intelligence are presented.

Pflaum, Will. The Bell Curve: Unsound Ideology. CITY SUN, November 2-8, 1994, vol.10, no.43, p.7.

Intelligence tests are garbage, any difference in test scores are based on historical and environmental factors, not race. Murray and Herrnstein failed to look at a 1961 intelligence study that showed African American intelligence to be higher than white intelligence.

Reiland, R. Ralph. The Truth About IQ: Albert Einstein vs. Charles Murray. CITY SUN, November 30 - December 6, 1994, vol.10, no.47, p.29.

TBC authors don't seem to worry that theories of racial inferiority, like TBC, have fueled some of the most colossal crimes in human history. What TBC says about Black people in America today, are some of the same things that was once said about the Chinese, Poles, Italians, and women.

Rising to the Occasion: Black Intellectuals Confront "The Bell Curve". CALIFORNIA BLACK FACULTY & STAFF ASSOCIATION NEWS (BFSA NEWS), November-December 1994, vol.18, no.6, pp.4-9.

TBC is an assault on Black mental capacity. TBC authors (neo-conservatives with liberal roots) have no extensive formal education in genetics, medicine, anthropology or logic, and are not embarrassed by their lack education. TBC Asian superiority notion is a sinister twist to shield racist intent and promote anti-Black sentiments. Comments and observations on TBC by thirty-one Black intellectuals in the U.S. is provided.

Smith, J. Owens. White Backlash, Campaign '94, the Bell Curve, and Social Darwinism are Bedfellows. CALIFORNIA BLACK FACULTY & STAFF ASSOCIATION NEWS (BFSA NEWS), November-December 1994, vol.18, no.6, p.2.

TBC is the culmination of liberal democratic electorial defeat, white backlash, and a changing American economy. The IQ argument seems to be a cry for the institutionalization of racism. Organization will hinder social Darwinism and questions that link race or genetics to intelligence.

Strong, James. Silliness of Bell Curve. HERALD DISPATCH, November 3, 1994, vol.44, no.24, pp.A-4, A-9.

TBC hides under silly white spermist pseudo-science to ignore the fact that IQ tests are culturally biased, poor indicators of intelligence, and that intelligence is not produced genetically.

Talyor, Robert N. The Bell Curve -- The Most Dangerous Book in America? THE CALL, November 4-10, 1994, vol.75, no.15, p.4.

The hoax of TCB, despite its controversial thesis, is that it has received widespread media and conservative Republican support. And authors have presented themselves as well meaning intellectuals who aim to reveal an unpopular truth.

Thorpe, Richard. Author of Race Relations Book Derides Bell Curve Theories. BAY STATE BANNER, November 24, 1994, vol.30, no.10, p.7.

A report of a talk by author Andrew Hacker at Harvard concerning TBC which focused on white America's anti-Black obsession.

Walsh, Joan. The Other IQ Flap. OAKLAND POST, November 9, 1994, vol.31, no.47, pp.1,6.

An "Irish-American" in San Francisco tells of how affirmative action is sometimes used for white students to diversify Asian student population. She attributes Asian intelligence to Asian values, hard work, discipline, and study, not genetics as TBC suggests. TBC Black inferiority discussion is infuriating, and the ugly secret of TBC is to cast off all, but the elite.

Washington, Harriet A. Murray's Bell Curve Rings of Racism. EMERGE, December-January, 1994-95, vol.6, no.3, p.22.

TBC is hate mail cloaked in numbers and charts that slanders Black America with notions of irrevocable Black inferiority in a tone of infinite white academic regret. The opinions and ideas of Arthur Jensen, William Shockley, J. Phillipe Rushton, Robert Gordon, Roger Person, Ralph Scott, and their link to New York-based Pioneer Fund is explored.

Washington, Harriett A. Straightening Out the Bell Curve. EMERGE, December-January, 1994-95, vol.6, no.3, pp.28,30-32.

An interview with K. Anthony Appiah of Harvard, he states that TBC presents little new data, most heredity data is irrelevant to Black and white IQ test scores, there is very little serious attention to statistical test analysis in TBC, the book puts fancy clothing on what many people already believe, is incorrect in its relevance of measuring group heritability, and contains fundamental methodological problems.

Wibecan, Ken. A Racist Theory. HERALD DISPATCH, November 3, 1994, vol.44, no.24, p.A-4.

TBC has been discredited by most experts, its method of study and results are flawed because African Americans are not a genetically homogeneous population (hence the research results are phony), however the U.S. public want to believe TBC conclusions because it attempts to deprecate the African American community. TBC aim is to influence public debate and develop a cognitive elite.

Williams, Walter E. Elite Destruction of Opportunities, NEW PITTSBURGH COURIER, January, 21, 1995, vol.86, no.6, p. A-6.

The "cognitive elite" via TBC social policy has hindered youth employment opportunities for the poor. The author tell of his early work history to illustrate how youth today have less opportunity to work because of numerous youth labor laws.

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